



Fig. 1.1 Car 2651 is seen in this archival view during its years at Phillipsburg. (IG4)



Fig. 1.2 Car 351 has been restored in Windsor, ON, and is awaiting a display site. (IG22)

“A TALE OF TWO TROLLEYS”

This issue represents a departure from our usual policy of covering only the activities of the Society. Instead, this edition features a story of two trolley cars, each built, run and restored by different firms. Yet despite these differences, the cars are now approaching previous operational appearances, with many startling coincidences along the way. Dave Phraner tells the story beginning on page 3.

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Currently, meetings are being held remotely. We anticipate that in-person monthly membership meetings will resume shortly at the Rahway First Presbyterian Church Library, 1731 Church Street (corner of W. Grand Avenue) in Rahway on the third Tuesday of each month.

- Food (Dutch) is available at 6:00 PM.
- Formal business meeting starts at 7:00. PM
- Program starts approximately 7:30 PM.to 8:00 PM
- During periods of bad weather, consult the website to ascertain the meeting status.

2021 Dues notification is extended with this edition. Dues are \$25 per year. Payment is still due upon receipt. Thanks to all paid-up members!

“A Tale of Two Trolleys”

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Photo collections: Bob Sherwood and Bill Keigher. Trolley Treasures, Vols. I and III, (A. Mankoff, C. Wrege); Public Service Trolley Lines of NJ (E. Hamm); Windsor Star; NJERHS Trolley Lines (Editor Tony Hall); NJERHS Destinations (Editor Bob Hooper); Motor Coach Age (Motor Bus Society); Public Service of New Jersey’s All-Service Vehicle (J.D. Wilkins, S.D. Phraner).

Thanks go to Martha and Julien Wolfe of Windsor, ON, for their assistance in researching this article. Thanks to Tony Hall, the late Frank Miklos, Bob Hooper, the Tomczyk Bros, Hank Kaminski, George La Pierre and a host of dedicated volunteers who saved 2651 and the other cars in the collection.

“A TALE OF TWO TROLLEYS”

Dave Phraner

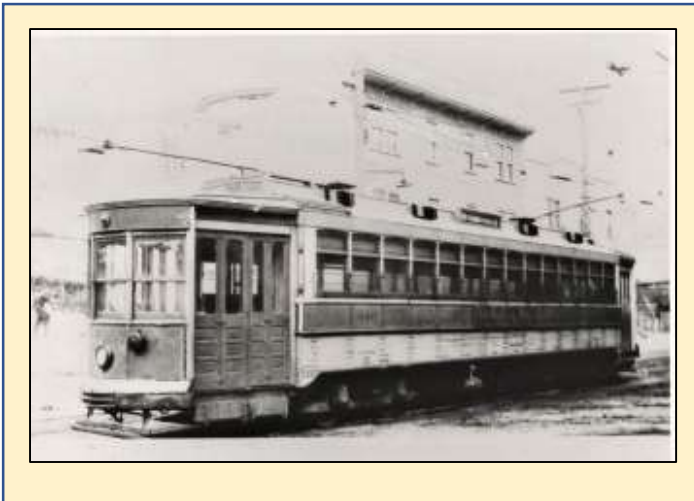


Fig. 3.1 Car #340 in Public Service paint at St. George, Staten Island (1924) (Keigher Collection P133)



Fig. 3.2 Strikingly handsome, even in drab primer, Car 2651 awaits her “REALLY BIG MOVE.” (December 2019) (15-1)

It is fitting that we commemorate two unique streetcars on this the 100th anniversary of their construction and deployment in war efforts. With apologies to Charles Dickens, this yarn about two trolley cars is unique as to their origin and their parallel histories. Dickensian London and Paris were very different, but these streetcars were identical, as built. Their stories, however, are vastly different. The descriptions below reveal the succession of ownerships, history and the cars’ details.

It has been written that both trolleys were built at the same place, by the same builder. That’s easy to believe because of their identical as-built appearance, but it’s not so. It’s easy to accept that myth since they were built at almost the same time (only a year apart), built to the same specifications,

and even with the same paint scheme. Yet their parallel stories diverge upon delivery to their initial owners. One was part of orders growing to 200 cars, while the other was in an order for only 20 cars. One ran its entire active life on the tracks of its private builder/operator, while the other ran in a neighboring state and eventually for a public operator, then in an adjacent country. At the end of their active lives, they both were adapted as buildings in our two neighboring nations: both as residences, and one later as a rural outbuilding. Today, their histories converge, both are being restored to near original operational appearances.

Similarly, each was nearly scrapped on at least two occasions over their 100-year lifetimes. These are their stories, starting from these cars’ earliest origins.

Early Origins of Public Service Streetcar Standard Design Shared by Both Cars

One of the early objectives of Public Service Railway (PSRY) management was to achieve standardization in their streetcar fleet. They had inherited a diverse array of obsolete streetcars

from the companies they had absorbed in the first decade of the 20th century. Standardization was

In Staten Island Service: 1918-1927



Fig. 4.1 RL&RR 338 EFC Car, St George, Staten Island, NY (1921).
(Sherwood Collection SH12-2)



Fig. 4.2 Richmond Light & Railroad 313 at St. George (1924).
(Bernard Linder Collection Sh10-6)



Fig. 4.3 In service on Staten Island 1920's: #325(L), a Brill (#104) Birney (Foreground) and compromise roof cars wearing Public Service colors (right). St. George was a busy transfer point for passengers from ferries, SIRT trains and Richmond Light Railway Trolleys. (Osgood-Bradley p132)



Fig. 4.4 RL&RR, one of the 330-349 series EFC cars, at St George Ferry (Apr 1920). (Sherwood Collection SH12-1)



Fig. 4.5 RL&RR 325, Clove Rd & Victory Blvd (1926). Vehicular pavement has already encroached upon the trolley track and soon would destroy the service. The handwriting was on the ground. (NYC Archives SH14)



Fig. 4.6 Staten Island trolley car #343 at Sunnyside and Clove Road seems to be saying "Come on aboard, we're waiting to serve you!" Unfortunately, too few heeded. (Sherwood Collection SH29)

begun by the Public Service Corporation even a year before consolidation of operating entities into Public Service Railway in 1907. In 1906 the standard car of the day was introduced; an asymmetric profile “pay as you enter” (PAYE), 11-window design with long rear platform for the conductor and a short front platform for the motorman. Yes, they were all two-man cars as was the practice of the day. While that design grew to 14-window symmetric (equal sized end platforms) configuration, the distinctive Public Service car architecture carried through the variants in function and size.¹ 1912 produced the standard pattern Public Service city and interurban car with symmetric profile, equal length platforms, 12-windows per side, MU controls, epitomized by preserved PSRY car #2431 at Shore Line Trolley Museum. Later the PS standard was extended to 13 or 14 side windows.

The ultimate of the standard design city car finally emerged in 1915 with the prototype 14-window car, Car 2600 and subsequent orders for 100 cars. Preserved in New Jersey, Car 2651 was a member of that series. The success of that design resulted in building a total of nearly 200 copies: the 2600-2775 series cars. In addition to being a longer 51 feet (okay, 50’10”) design, this series had a distinctive roof clerestory that became known commonly as a *compromise roof*. No other streetcar system anywhere operated with such a unique roof feature.... well, almost no other.

The United States had not yet entered World War I when the 2600s were in the erecting bays of Public Service Plank Road (Ferry St.) Shops in Newark’s Ironbound section. Like other cars in the series, Car 2651 built in 1917, went through multiple modifications over its life span but the unique roof design remained.

Emergency Fleet Corporation (EFC)

Our tale of the two trolleys begins as the United States prepared for war in 1916 and became fully engaged in 1918. Our federal government reacted by intervening similarly in the transport system, no matter the conflict. During the Civil War, the United States Military Railroad (USMR) was established to build, requisition, and operate selected railroads. In 1917, the US Railroad Administration (USRA) took over the nation’s railroads, in effect nationalizing the system. In 1940, the Office of Defense Transportation (ODT) dictated transport supply and the use of strategic materials, even to the uniform color of the buses. On April 16, 1916, the U.S. shipping board created the *Emergency Fleet Corporation* (EFC) to float more marine tonnage in support of the war effort and to replenish the aging merchant marine fleet,

as the German U-boats were active. EFC built more than ships: It also built streetcars and housing.

All the wars had the common need to reorganize transport logistics. Maritime transportation was essential to supply and to transport troops and materials overseas. To accomplish that objective, ships, lots of ships, were built and requisitioned. EFC’s initial objective was a fleet of up to 3,100 new and appropriated vessels. Since this was primarily a European war, eastern shipyards particularly felt the pressure to build no-frills standardized utility ships of two basic types: a cargo ship (EFC Plan 2022) and a passenger troop ship (EFC Plan 2024). The shipyards along the east coast and their workforce were mobilized into 24-hour wartime shifts. Because streetcars were the predominant urban transport of the period, that

¹ The standard PSRY car configuration was a central car body with two end platform extensions mounted on pairs of

structural knees. Window ends and sides had arched windows initially, later end window arches were squared.

In Windsor, Ontario Service: 1927-1937



Fig. 6.1 Windshield sash refits were undertaken in an inconsistent fashion, as seen in views on this page. The more functional single-pane sash replaced the original double sashes on most EFC cars. (Keigher Collection p147-r)



Fig. 6.2 Car 363 approaching Ferry Dock, Windsor (1936). A late 30's auto blocks the curb, but no matter, 363 will make her way efficiently and sustainably toward the boat dock. (Keigher Collection p150-r)



Fig. 6.3 Car 360 standing in the yards of the SW&A, in Windsor (April 1935). (Wilbur Sherwood P149)



Fig. 6.4 High rise development was already happening in Windsor, portending the growing need for serious public transit in the near future. (Keigher Collection p148l)



Fig. 6.5 Passing the now unobstructed entrance to a handsome Art Deco office building, Car 363 glides unfettered to her destination. This location was a hot spot for 1930's trolley photographers. Thank Goodness! (Keigher Collection p151l)



Fig. 6.6 Car 364 is at the SW&A carhouse for a crew change. Note that the side route sign box has been surgically removed, a modification not done to all Windsor cars. (Edward T. Francis Collection P151-dr)

meant more streetcars were needed to handle the workman surges at shipyard and other defense plant shift changes. EFC would contract to purchase new cars, requisition others and then contract with local operators to run those cars under lease. EFC even built shipyard workers' villages (like Yorkship Village, now Fairview, in Camden and Winfield Park in Union County) but

that is another story. There is an interesting sidebar story here to mention briefly. Those familiar with Red Arrow/Philadelphia Suburban Transit rail lines in West Philadelphia know the name H. Merritt Taylor. His father, A. Merritt Taylor was director of Housing and Transport for EFC... It's how the family got involved in streetcars.

EFC: Philadelphia

The largest of EFC shipyard ventures was at Hog Island near Philadelphia (the current site of PHL airport). Over 200 double-end streetcars were constructed in 1918-1919 for EFC and these were called "Hog Islands" (4000 and 5000 series). To no

one's surprise, they all were built by hometown builder Brill to PRT/Mitten management design and appearance. The 122 ships constructed at the shipyard also came to be known as "Hog Islanders."

EFC: Camden Area

Across the Delaware River in Camden, the New York Ship Yard was also part of the EFC effort. The streetcar tracks already linked some shipwrights' housing to the yard, but more cars were needed to handle shift change traffic. For that purpose, thirty-two standard PS-design, double end Public Service 13-window city cars (3250-3282) and twenty-five 14-window PS city cars (3225-3249) were built, some with maximum traction trucks and MU controls. The larger 14-window cars, except for wide gauge trucks and MU controls, were otherwise identical to the PS 2600 series cars in the Northern Division, described above. These fifty-eight cars were built by Cincinnati Car Company *for the EFC* in accord with the PSRY designs and standards.

Later when Camden trolley lines were motorized, Public Service purchased these cars, moved them to its Northern Division, regauged and renumbered them in the high 2700 series (2751-2775) to operate in Hudson and Essex Counties. There they joined 18 middle 2700s (2726-2743) built for EFC to

be used on the Northern division for access to Port Newark area shipyards.

What makes all this somewhat confusing is that PSRY had already contracted with Cincinnati to build fifty cars (2701 to 2750) before US entry in the war. When we entered the war effort, PS arranged for EFC to build (pay for) 18 of those cars (2723-2746) in that order for the shipyard service. PS got to use the cars but avoided the expense of paying for them. Later at the end of the war, PS bought them from EFC for pennies on the dollar. Older 1913 vintage PS-built 3200 series (3200-3221) 13-window cars also came north by railroad flat cars around 1928. At least one migrated on its own wheels after a gauge transformation at Trenton. Adding to the confusion, some cars changed fleet numbers three times. Example: wide gauge Car 3231 moved north as standard gauge Car 2757, then modernized for the new Newark City Subway service, it became Car 8017. We mention this EFC - PSRY relationship, not as a distraction, but because it has direct relevance to the two preserved streetcars and the subjects of this monograph.

In Windsor Service, cont'd



Fig. 8.1 Car 370 in 1936 is gliding past a mid-1930's sedan which was cluttering the curb. (Elmer Kremkow/Jack E. Schramm Collection p152Aul)



Fig. 8.2 Her number hard to spot, this EFC car passes the popular photo hot spot. (Keigher Collection p152l)



Fig. 8.3 With number obscured, this summer shot shows an EFC car sporting an interurban headlight, typical of cars assigned to the busy "FORD" line which served the automaker's vast Windsor works. (Keigher Collection p152-r)

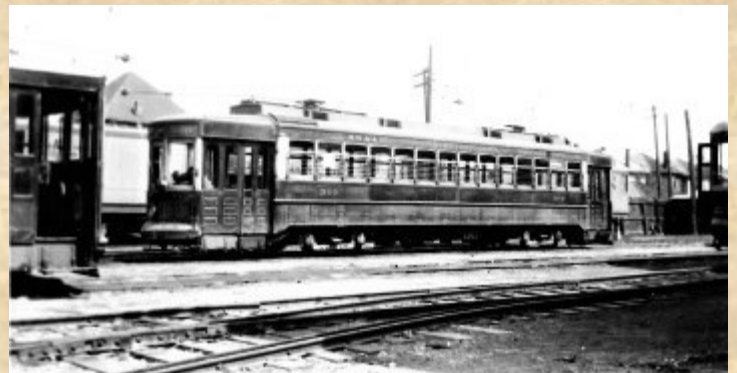


Fig. 8.4 SW&A 360 enjoys a hard-earned off-peak layover at the car yard in Windsor (April 1935). (W G Sherwood Collection SH1)



Fig. 8.5 Windsor Car 355. Roof sign boxes are still intact. Minor refits made to EFC cars were not entirely consistent. (V5)



Fig. 8.6 Windsor streetcar, number once again obscured, is buttoned up for a cooler season and shows her surgically-removed route sign boxes. Air whistles and dual markers were added to the upper dashes above the doors. (V3)

EFC Staten Island

In shipyard-rich Richmond County, NY, there was no indigenous rail car building capability. But just across Newark Bay, PSRY was cranking out hundreds of streetcars (2600-2700, 4000-4196) during the 1915-1918 period. The Public Service prototype Car 2600 became the model selected by EFC for NY/NJ harbor shipyard wartime streetcars. It was also the pattern car for nearly 200 subsequent cars in the series. Cars of this type were deployed for increased ship worker access to the Staten Island, Port Newark, Elizabeth, Kearny and Camden shipyards. All featured the unique compromise roof design. It is easy therefore to assume that the cars were built at the Public Service Newark Plank Road Shops, either from the ground up or assembled from kits from Cincinnati Car Company. Not so. *All cars built for the EFC came from Cincinnati Car Co.* Same car design as the PS-built 2600s, but for a different customer and for a dedicated purpose.

Put another way that's easier to remember: regardless of identical appearance, all cars 2600-2700 were PS built. All cars 2701-2775, (except for four cited below) some renumbered from PS Southern Division 3200s, are Cincinnati built. All cars built for EFC for Staten Island, New York and New Jersey are Cincinnati Car Co. in origin, before that company started specializing in light weight cars for which they are most famous.

EFC actually paid to have these cars built and retained title to them, though they were leased and operated by local transit companies. At the end of the war with a glut of shipping tonnage, the yards cut back production and the almost new wartime streetcars were sold to their respective lessees, PSRY and Richmond (Staten Island) Light & Railroad companies, at quite reasonable prices. They fit right into the roster of their host transit operator and became undistinguishable from non-EFC cars in the host's fleet.

Sorting Through the Car Fleet Numbers

One can speculate (so I will) on the reason for EFC selecting Cincinnati to build the 20 cars for Staten Island shipyards and not Public Service. Both builders had an equally solid reputation for competent building identical cars; generally, the 2600-2700 (101 cars) by PSRY and the 2701-2775 by Cincinnati, with the inexplicable exception of four cars 2739-2742 in the middle of the order which were built by PS at Plank Road shops, (according to *"The Public Service Trolley Lines of New Jersey"* by Ed Hamm, Jr.). One reason may have been that EFC preferred to use a national builder like Cincinnati rather than a local transit operator that side lined as a car builder like PSRY. Also, PSRY was just finishing up building more than three-hundred cars (2600-2700, and 4000-4196)

and may not have wished to bid. Finally, since Cincinnati had built the cars for the PS Southern Division service to New York Ship Building Co. yard and Yorkship Village (a planned residential development for shipyard workers built by EFC, now renamed Fairview), it was an easy transition for them to keep the assembly line open and build twenty more identical cars for Staten Island. We will probably never be able to verify the real reasons, but it puts to rest the issue of "Who conceived what?" of EFC's "war baby" trolley car fleet.

Discovery and Retrieval, 2017



Fig. 10.1 This lovely suburban home hid a glamorous secret for 8 decades! (2017). (Sherwood Collection SH30)



Fig. 10.2 Sharp-eyed trolley fans spotted the characteristic bay window hidden beneath a carport -- revealing that the car had been trapped inside the structure (August 2017). (Sherwood Collection SH27)



Fig. 10.3 Just as with Car 2651 in 1973 at Long Valley NJ, the number of Car 351 was revealed only after some vigorous paint removal. (IN-3)



Fig. 10.5 Car 351 is transported to the restoration site. (August 10, 2015). (Nick Brancaccio/The Windsor Star V9)



Fig. 10.4 Demolishing the house that contained Car 351. A high price to pay, but WHAT A REWARD! (V7)



Fig. 10.6 Car 351, like 2651, was cruelly wrested from her repose by intrepid trolley restorers, who hoped to squeeze yet another 100 years of service from her rotting corpse. (Nick Brancaccio/The Windsor Star SH11-3)



Fig. 10.7 In a scene the ancient Egyptians of the Old Kingdom would recognize, the corpse is readied for mumification in preparation for its seemingly eternal life. (Sherwood Collection

Out of 234 PSRY designed compromise roof cars, only two nearly identical streetcars miraculously survived this tumult; PSRY Car 2651 and Richmond Light & RR. Co. (Staten Island) Car 203; both war babies now being restored.

I find it fascinating to consider that, had the timing been right, during their active lives the cars could

have operated within sight of one another, Car 203 on Richmond Terrace at Port Richmond, NY on the north shore of Staten Island and Car 2651 at Bergen Point, NJ on the south shore of the Bayonne Peninsula with the Public Service ferry crossing the Kill Van Kull to link the two shores, states and trolley companies. Fourteen years separated that possibility.

Public Service Railway Car 2651

PSRY Car 2651 is a 51 foot (over the anticlimbers) standard double-end, 14-window, city-type car for high density urban routes in Essex and Hudson Counties. Some of the lines served by these cars ventured into Passaic, Union and Bergen Counties. It was one of the family of Public Service cars with the unique (to PSRY) "compromise roof," a clerestory appendage originally equipped with eyebrow windows that were later replaced with sheet steel inserts in place of the glass panes. Car 2651 is being restored to the original glass window clerestory arrangement. Breakage and leaks were the likely causes of replacement of glass with steel. A builder's photo of an EFC Camden 3200 in PS paint at the Cincinnati works shows no glass panes in the clerestory. None of the extant photos of the Staten Island cars either in New York or Ontario show that feature. Two *major* changes occurred in the active life of Car 2651. The first was the replacement of the HL controllers with a pair of K-35 types in 1922. Somewhat later, the car was likely converted to one-man car configuration.

Initially (1917) assigned to the Essex Division centered in Newark, Car 2651 worked out of a half dozen PSRY car barns: South Orange, Big Tree, Lake St, Miller St, Central Ave. and Roseville. As was customary among large transit operators, car components were switched with new assignments. The North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society (NJERHS) has researched and tracked this complex, but routine car assignment process. In addition to

the two major changes and frequent car house reassignments described above, every two to three years, Car 2651 had its vitals swapped with other cars, components being serviced in the process. NJERHS has documented names, dates, donor and recipient car numbers. During its lifespan, Car 2651 ran on three different model trucks. It was initially built with Standard O-50s, a short wheelbase heavy duty, city type truck. Later it got Brill 27Gs and for the remainder of its active in-revenue service life, the car switched back and forth between these two truck models over a half dozen times. Similarly, compressors traction motors and other major components were swapped between sister cars, other city closed cars of early vintage and open cars of the 4000-4100 series.

Finally, in a preserved state, Car 2651 is now equipped with its third truck type; Standard C-60P, a type that it never had in regular revenue service, nor did any other Public Service streetcar. The most common truck type in later years was the Standard C-50P. This mild violation of authenticity can be forgiven on two counts; the C-50 and C-60 are of the same design and appearance, the 60 being slightly more robust. It would be the equivalent of upgrading to alloy wheels and larger profile tires for your automobile. The second reason is: in car restoration quests for authentic parts, particularly for something 50-100 years old,

Restoration Undertaken, 2018



Fig. 12.1 The damage inflicted by the house builders 80 years ago is immediately evident. (Keigher Collection Pt2-4)



Fig. 12.2 The steel roof ribs were sheathed with a Homosote predecessor called "Agasote." (Keigher Collection Pt3-3)



Fig. 12.3 Not much is left of the car's platform, but there is evidence of long-gone controllers and brake stands. (Keigher Collection pt3-1)



Fig. 12.4 The interior seating arrangement was changed during its service life, and those changes were visible in the holes left over from seat pedestals long since removed. (Keigher Collection pt3-2)



Fig. 12.5 Seven of the original steel roof formers have been cleaned up and painted. (Keigher Collection pt4-2)



Fig. 12.6 Car 351 during restoration. "You've come a long way, Baby!" (Sherwood Collection SH3)

you aim high but take what you can get. The folks working on the Windsor car had the same problem, and the restored Car 351 is mounted on a lightweight truck from a Pennsylvania trolley museum, since no rare O-50 could be found or made available.

With the major motorization or abandonment of over 70 trolley routes by PS in the 1930s, a glut of surplus streetcars cluttered the PSCT property.² The open cars, Birneys, and pre-1912 cars (numbering in the hundreds) were scrapped. Public Service was a hoarder of sorts. They kept a reserve fleet of the best out-of-service cars that could be placed back in operation quickly. This practice was carried into the bus era. Car 2651 was one of the survivors of the 1930s trolley route purge and scrapping frenzy. During 1937, it was taken out of service and stored with many other surplus cars in the reserve fleet at Public Service's Passaic Wharf storage yard. This facility was located on Doremus Avenue, Newark, not far from the Plank Road shops.³ True to its name, the wharf had bulkhead frontage on the navigable Passaic River. This was the place where PS hoarded streetcars, vehicles of all types and even ferryboats: a virtual museum. Regrettably, most of its artifacts did not survive the next purge. Car 2651 reposed there for five years in case an emergency of some kind would cause its revival from slumber. That emergency came in the form of Pearl Harbor and Nazi invasions in western Europe.

In the early 1942, like her selected sister cars, Car 2651 was moved to Plank Road Shops to be readied for wartime service to defense plants and shipyards. Among its first assignments was servicing the Naval shipyard in Elizabeth. Later, it was transferred to the Hudson Division to work two patched together resuscitated streetcar routes, (South Kearny and Federal) formed from fragments of streetcar trackage

abandoned in PS corporate zeal to replace trolleys with all service vehicles (ASVs, AKA trolley buses).

That assignment ended with the conclusion of (overt) hostilities. In 1946, two factors led to the scrapping or repositioning of the Hudson streetcars: the discontinuance of the war time streetcar service to the Kearny Peninsula and the priority to motorize Hudson Division streetcars using the Jersey City elevated in the post war period. Unlike the remaining Hudson Division streetcars at Greenville car/bus garage, Car 2651 escaped being cut in three segments and trucked to federal salvage (a PS affiliate) to be burned and scrapped. Car 2651 (and Car 2431 now at Shoreline Trolley Museum) and some few lucky sister cars were purchased to live on as outbuildings or residences. Two or three were set aside and then scrapped for lack of private resources or will to preserve them.

From a broader view, some context is appropriate. In the post-war period, Public Service was undergoing a major renewal of its transit fleet due to four circumstances:

1. The replacement of the deteriorated and aged-out 583-unit All-Service Vehicle fleet.
2. The motorization of Hudson streetcar routes that used the elevated structure.
3. The modernization of the motorbus fleet after inability to fulfill its normal annual replenishment rate due to the lack of strategic materials during the war.
4. The fact that Public Service was creating a new standard of an all-diesel / hydraulic city bus fleet. Anything else not meeting that new standard was considered for disposal. PS had ceased to be a hoarder and "preservation" was no longer in the Public Service corporate vocabulary.

A few other cars in the 2400 and 2700 series were privately set aside for possible preservation, but subsequently scrapped. It was assumed by their individual owners that the still active cars in the Newark

² Public Service Railway became Public Service Coordinated Transport in 1928.

³ This was also around the same time that the Windsor, Ex-Staten Island car was also taken out of service to be sold or scrapped.

Restoration Continues 2017-2019



Fig. 14.1 During restoration, Car 351 is looking better than new. We call this kind of job a "Williamsburg." (Sherwood Collection SH4)



Fig. 14.2 Parts were hard to find. Yet, found they were. (IN-8)



Fig. 14.3 End platforms have taken shape. (IN-7)



Fig. 14.4 Car 351 interior during restoration, revealing the seating pattern characteristic of the cars during Windsor service. (V12)



Fig. 14.5 K-35 controllers are shown, similar to those in car 2651. (V13)



Fig. 14.6 Car 351 K-35 controller head. At center: throttle handles. At right: the Off/On Forward & Reverse switch. Note the mounting of the trolley-catcher, outside the window, within reach of the crew inside the car. This feature was welcomed by operators who were required to change ends during a frigid Canadian winter, when venturing outside might have required snowshoes. (V14)

City Subway could always be preserved later. They were not!

Editor Note: The author, perhaps wisely, avoids mention of the infamous and widely documented "National City Lines scandal" in which General Motors et al were convicted of sabotaging the nation's transportation systems in order to substitute busses and automobiles.

Meanwhile, Car 2651 became a temporary residence and finally an outdoor potting shed in 1947. It was discovered in 1973. The following year, one individual working with like-minded volunteers obtained the car and moved it to Ringoes, NJ. In 2001, it was moved again to Phillipsburg to more secure storage, at a time when the vision of Phillipsburg as the host of the NJ Transportation Heritage Center was still alive. A set of

North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society (NJERHS)

No story of trolley preservation and restoration in New Jersey would be complete without citing the dedication of key individuals assembled as a team of volunteers under the banner of NJERHS. Salvation for Car 2651 came initially by the efforts of one individual, Tony Hall, who discovered the car and formulated a plan to save and restore it. He contacted the owners who agreed to part with it and have it removed. Hall, Frank Miklos and this author then assembled a crew and, over numerous weekends, cleaned out the car and removed the protective overhead canopy structure. The car was then trailered to Ringoes where restoration began. Accompanying the restoration effort was the building of a pole barn to shelter Car 2651 along with another car owned by other parties with plans for restoration. A search for parts commenced including searching for other abandoned or disused 2600/2700 series cars that had been converted to residences. Two such otherwise unsalvageable car shells yielded many parts and body panels; one in Jackson and the other in Montville, NJ. Also, a former Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co. sweeper was obtained as an excellent source of parts (six

C-60P trucks enabled it to move for the first time under its own (welder assisted) power. Finally, in 2018, Car 2651 was moved to Piscataway NJ to inside storage at the KS plant where it remains under care at this time.

We know of at least four 2600-2700 streetcar bodies that were stripped of salvageable metal by Public Service before being sold as body shells for other residential and commercial purposes. Car 2651 was one of these repurposed cars. The others became parts donors in varying degrees. Part of the successful rescue and restoration of Car 2651 is the extensive scrounging that took place. One of those missions was to recover usable parts from a car that had been set aside for preservation but torched by vandals at a failed New Jersey Trolley Museum. That car was a former Philadelphia EFC Hog Islander!

motors, two controllers). By that time and due to volunteer crew efforts, the car began to resemble a genuine Public Service streetcar of 1940s vintage paint. An organization was established to continue support of Car 2651 and preserve other remnants of the Public Service streetcar fleet. It incorporated as The North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society (NJERHS), a non-profit corporation in the state of New Jersey.



Suggested further reference: two excellent publications by North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society, *Destinations* and *Trolley Lines*, plus their very informative web site: **<www.njerhs.org/equipment>** for details on the history and restoration efforts for Car 2651, former Car 2683 (now work flat Car 5423), and other artifacts in their collection.

Richmond Light & Railroad (RL&R) Company Car 203

For those readers who are unfamiliar with the borough/county structure of New York City, Staten Island is known officially as Richmond County. Richmond, Light and Railroad Company (RL&R) was one of three streetcar companies on the island. Its operating domain consisted of seven routes, all except one originating at the St. George ferry (to Manhattan and Brooklyn) terminal. The heaviest used route was along Richmond Terrace and it's probable that Car 203 served more hours on that route than any other. The cars of the series, however, were dispatched to all of the other six RL&R routes that covered the northern and western neighborhoods of the island. Another streetcar operator on the Island was Staten Island Midland Railway, which covered the south and eastern part of the transit service area along with the third company having a single short route to South Beach. The EFC cars were intended to serve the shipyards, generally along the north shore of the island paralleled by the North Shore branch of the Staten Island Rapid Transit and the RL&R streetcars on Richmond Terrace. The cars were housed at the Brook St. car barn (near the intersection of Jersey Avenue, Brook Street and Richmond Turnpike) in the Tompkinsville Section of Staten Island. While the cars were deployed on all seven routes of the company, it seems likely that they spent most of their mileage on the busiest Richmond Terrace route between St. George, Port Richmond and Howland Hook/Port Ivory. They connected with ferries at both ends of that route.

Unlike the Public Service cars that were well maintained and lasted for over three decades, the Staten Island cars were unloved and undermaintained. The politization of transport at Richmond County during the terms of Mayors Hylan, Walker and subsequent administrations, plus labor unrest and the City-imposed 5-cent fare limitation created financial problems for RL&R. It

showed in the deteriorating condition and appearance of the cars. These factors (combined with early and not particularly successful trolleybus ventures) created disfavor for electric transit and streetcars by the under-capitalized operator. The ratty appearance of the cars contributed to the riding public's increasing poor attitude toward streetcars. Photographs of the Staten Island cars show advanced deterioration after only five or six years in service. Trolley service was doomed when the city bought out RL&R and the City's Department of Plant and Structures took over the trolley routes and trolleybus operation. The city's experience operating streetcars was no better than the private company's performance. The trolleys were destined to disappear, at least on Staten Island.

Eventually the City contracted with Tompkins Coach Co. and other private bus operators to manage their failed former streetcar routes, using buses. The rest of post-war Staten Island had become more devoted to routine business and suburban development; more in scale with bus-type transit demand rather than war time shift change surges that only large streetcars could manage. During this post-war period, the shipyards and commerce on the north shore of settled down to a less frantic commercial ship repair business. Some yards were never to *return to normalcy* (candidate Harding's favorite campaign phrase), and some were abandoned, such as Shooters Island (1922).

By 1926, the move to motorize (substitute with buses) Staten Island street transit was well advanced. The streetcars service was curtailed in 1926. In anticipation of the end, the compromise roof cars were advertised for sale as early as 1924, only six years after being introduced to operate on Richmond Terrace tracks to the St. George Ferry.

Since the compromise roof cars were relatively young, they were still marketable. An enterprising individual and streetcar broker, Gary Abel, obtained all twenty of the PS-like roof cars and advertised them on the market. Because of their poor appearance and condition, Abel offered to refurbish the cars to the new owner's specifications. The cars were driven to the RR&L car barn on Brook St. in the Tompkins section of

the island and rebuilt to a higher standard of amenity. Longitudinal rattan seats were replaced with leather cross seats. The now faded and stressed exterior with its original PS-like yellow and pinstriped cream paint scheme was repainted in the Hydro's attractive maroon and cream livery including the new owner's SW&A logo. One feature retained was the distinctive compromise roof.

Ontario Hydro / Windsor Amherstburg and Sandwich Railway Car 351

In response to the advertisement for the twenty restored decade-old streetcars, Ontario Hydro (OH), the province's large and prosperous electric utility, bought the fleet including car RL&R Car 203, which was renumbered as OH Car 351. The cars were assigned to the Sandwich, Windsor and Amherstburg Railway, a notable traction property. It was the first in Canada to run electric streetcars (Van Depoele system) in 1886, and the first to operate trolley busses (1922)!

At the time of the Staten Island car fleet purchase, OH was known as Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario (HEPCO). It formally and corporately became Ontario Hydro in 1974, though it had been known locally by that nickname earlier. HEPCO was the creation of Adam Beck, a Van Sweringen/Insull-type utility entrepreneur. Beck's vision was to create a network of electric interurban railways throughout the southwestern region of the province, stretching between Windsor and Toronto. These *electric* railways and the *electric* utility businesses complimented each other in obvious ways. There was nothing unique about common ownership and synergistic practice among electric utilities and rail transit in the U.S. That is until the U.S. Federal government, through the *Public Utilities Holding Act* (1935) required utility corporations with electric railway holdings to be corporately separated. The effect was to divest the rail transit business (struggling financially at the

time) from the electric utility (increasingly profitable). This broke the synergy between the two institutions. Those of us who are old enough, witnessed the unintended consequence of this short-sighted legislation as it was happening. Public Service in New Jersey and SW&A in Ontario eventually did separate their businesses, but the latter was not because of government intervention. This gives us another parallel in the history of these two streetcars and their parent organizations. Public Service Coordinated Transport became Transport of NJ and then in 1979 NJ Transit was formed. In 1977, SW&A became Transit Windsor, the current bus operator in the region including the tunnel service to Detroit. Regarding Detroit, much earlier (1902-1920) Detroit United Railway owned SW&A.

Car 351 along with three sisters (352-354) were modified as interurban/suburban deluxe cars. This differentiated these cars from the rest of the common city-type cars in the series (355-370). These differences included the creation of a smoking compartment and deluxe reversible leather cross seating. Large high intensity headlights were mounted on the roof of these cars and air whistles installed on the right front panel above the front entrance door. These four interurban cars were dedicated to the interurban route between Windsor and Tecumseh, a community about nine miles east of downtown

Windsor. The route had extensive segments of private right-of-way. A Ford assembly plant was a major destination along the Tecumseh route (pronounced "Tecumsee" by the locals). "Ford" was also considered a turnback location along the line in addition to being a major traffic generator. The Ford plant was located near what is now the VIA Rail terminal just north of Wyandotte Street. One of the roof side roll signs miraculously survived when Car 351 was converted to a house. It has been preserved and it and other signage will be reproduced and applied to the restored Car 351. The most exposed and stressed destination aspect of the roll curtain was "Ford" indicating that the car spent most of its career in Windsor on that reassignment. The Tecumseh interurban electric route was the last SW&A rail line to operate before motor buses took over.

The other transplanted Staten Island cars in Windsor had what appeared to be random modifications applied to the roof area. Unlike the PS cars, the front and rear clerestory windows had no destination or route signage. The side roll signs mounted on both sides of the compromise roof clerestories had side sign boxes originally. At Windsor, some of these were blanked off. Some had the entire sign box removed and the vacant space covered to blend in with the rest of the side structure, as if no sign box ever existed. Others retained the sign boxes as originally delivered back in 1918. Regardless of the various modifications, the basic structure and appearance of the unique compromise clerestory roof was retained.

City of Windsor, ON, Car 351

Alas, as with other streetcar systems, Windsor's trolley era ended in 1939, but the decision to substitute buses was committed earlier in 1937. Windsor may have been the first major Canadian city to lose its streetcar system, a sad distinction since it was also the first to have electric streetcars.

A startling coincidence occurred in the process of the earlier Abel restoration of the cars into the OH 350 series and with the current Car 351 restoration. The cars were repainted in dark crimson below the belt rail and cream from the belt rail to the roof. That is the identical paint color arrangement of Public Service 2600-2700 series deluxe cars of the 1930s! PSRY's Car 2651, however, retained its city-type yellow and cream paint and was never painted the deluxe maroon and cream. But some other 2600s were so painted, leading to the conclusion that the Windsor and New Jersey cars' paint schemes in the 1930s were so similar that they could have been swapped and the riding public might never have noticed. Similarly, New Jersey and Staten Island cars with identical yellow and cream paint scheme as delivered could be mistaken for one another. The SW&A cars underwent individual alterations while at Windsor. Some of the cars' compromise roof head and side signs were blanked or removed entirely. The platform sash became one-piece on some, but not all the cars. While Car 351 is being restored with the two-segment end drop sash except for the middle of the three sashes, when operating in Windsor, the car had the end platform sash undivided. We assume that this one-piece end sashes were more weatherproof in Windsor's typically cold winter season. The Public Service cars had all three platform dash sashes of the segmented drop type. The distinctive compromise roof design was retained regardless of any other modifications.

The ex-Staten Island EFC compromise roof cars were scrapped or sold as cottages or sheds. Car 351 was sold for C\$100 to a family in the town of Belle River, about 15 miles east of Windsor. Since the car's arrival there in the late 1930s, Belle River and five other surrounding communities have been

consolidated (1999) into the town of Lakeshore. It was there that the car was discovered, following rumors of a streetcar enclosed in a house.

A local transit advocate and historian, Bernie Droulliard, resolved to find the lost streetcar. He found it, somewhat by accident, in 2015 when making a K-turn in a Lakeshore residential neighborhood. There it was -- a streetcar face peeking out of a carport.

The Car 351 recovery and restoration proposal did not start with the City of Windsor. A local restaurant owner had purchased the old Windsor streetcar barn on University Avenue and decided to create a trolley car theme restaurant in the building. What better way of exploiting that theme than to have a genuine streetcar that once operated on Windsor streets dispatched from this former car barn. It's not an original idea: the Olde Spaghetti Factory restaurant chain and others have tried the same idea with varying degrees of success. The new co-owners, George Soro and Van Niforos, purchased the car (and Belle River house) and had the latter demolished to liberate the car body. They trucked the car to their car barn for evaluation. The prognosis was daunting. Yes, the car could be restored, but the cost would be high. Meanwhile the mayor of Windsor became interested in the project. Soro offered to donate the car to the city for a tax write off. The deal was done and in rapid succession, the project was funded by the city, the car moved to a restorer for work to commence on the restoration.

About this same time newspaper coverage of events began swirling around Car 351. The City of Windsor, specifically its mayor, Drew Dilkens, became enthusiastic about the project and began a public campaign to determine where and how the car would be exhibited. Proposals were received to fully restore the car authentically as a static exhibit. It turned out that a sole-source proposal was

selected from a respected classic automobile restoring firm, RM Restoration, of Blenheim Ontario, near Chatham. Frankly this writer was skeptical about a restoration firm that specialized in classic automobiles being able to translate that skill into a streetcar project of this magnitude. In retrospect, there is no question that RM did due diligence research and skilled rebuilding of the Car 351. Work on the car shell began in October of 2017. Documentation and research were extensive. Thousands of photos were taken before the car was deconstructed. RM Restorations Project Manager Mario Van Raay threw a wide net in finding rare parts in both the U.S. and Canada. Streetcar Museums and operators were contacted and visited to obtain parts and advice. Happily, Van Raay's wide net included Bob Hooper, president of NJERHS, which was in the process restoring Car 2651. Though not directly involved, this writer assisted in linking the two parties.

Finally, a connection was made linking the preservation of both cars. *The Tale of Two Trolleys* was almost complete. The exchange of information and of some parts mutually benefited both projects. After an estimate 10,000 hours of work, in 2019 the Windsor car was completed and stored in an "undisclosed location." It was a complete rebuilding with some of the original components of the car structure recoverable. About 40% is claimed to be original in the completed streetcar. Deteriorated parts were taken from the car and used as patterns to custom fabricate all-new replacements. The cost of the Car 351 restoration was C\$750,000, as budgeted by Windsor's City Council.

Additional fundraising is underway to erect a properly secure and weatherproof exhibit building. Accompanying the restoration of the car there was active public outreach to determine the function of the car, once it was restored. Various proposals were submitted by citizens ranging from a café,

food dispensary, a visitors' center, and an interpretive exhibit space. Earlier, a preliminary recommendation on the function of the car could determine some of the restoration decisions. As

the car interior is already furnished with a combination of longitudinal seating, one side and cross seating on the other, that would preclude creating some of the proposed functions.

Celestial Beacon Waterfront

The proposal for exhibiting Car 351 getting most attention and approved by the City Council is for a new C\$7.5 million building to be constructed in a city-owned park along the Detroit River in West Windsor, just east of the approach to the Ambassador Bridge to Michigan. Windsor's award-winning, 5-mile-long park generally does not have any development on it presently, though there are no legal prohibitions for compatible and sensitive exceptions. The proposed project is called "Celestial Beacon" and it is part of a comprehensive central waterfront redevelopment plan. It would also provide safe, secure and weather protected exhibit space for the car. This proposed celestial building has raised objections from local residents that claim it will obscure views and diminish pristine and undisturbed parkland. Most of those objections come from residents along Riverside Drive bordering the park.

Since the Celestial Beacon would be constructed at a lower level than the drive, any blockage of the river views would be minimal, if at all. There is also a segment of local opposition and anti-tax partisans claiming the streetcar is a waste of taxpayer funds at this time of high unemployment due to the pandemic. Many supported the rebuilding and display of the streetcar but felt that it would be better if located near new city hall in downtown Windsor, and close to where it ran in service. Regardless of venue, Car 351 is preserved and restored. It is a testament to the possibilities that occur when public and mayoral support are combined. And all was accomplished within three years. Bravo Windsor! Car 2651 is also preserved. Bravo, North Jersey Electric Railway Historical Society! *Editor note: And a special "BRAVO" to our Canadian colleagues, who saved Car 351!*

Restored and Ready to Display



Fig. 20.1 Car 351 Restored at RM Auto Restorations of Blenheim, Ontario (Dec 2019). (David Hunter SH7)



Fig. 20.2 Trolley OH 351 restored (IG22)



Fig. 20.3 Windsor Restoration Project Emblem Car 351. (V1)